

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 161628Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6507
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, GE, GW
SUBJECT: GDR DUCKS "MANIFESTO" ISSUE AT
EAST BERLIN MASS RALLY

REFS: BERLIN 312 AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)

1. ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANNUAL RALLY
COMMEMORATING THE DEATHS OF ROSA LUXEMBURG AND
KARL LIEBKNECHT JANUARY 15, GDR AUTHORITIES
STUDIOUSLY AVOIDED EXPLOITING AN OPPORTUNITY
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TO CRITICIZE THE FRG AND WEST GERMAN MEDIA IN THE
WAKE OF THE SPIEGEL "MANIFESTO" (REFTELS) OR
TO DEAL WITH ISSUES IT RAISED. THE RALLY, ATTENDED
BY MOST OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP, WAS THE FIRST
SUCH PUBLIC EVENT SINCE PUBLICATION OF THE
"MANIFESTO" AND THE FIRST OCCASION ON WHICH THE
GDR LEADERSHIP COULD HAVE ADDRESSED THE ISSUE.

THE CENTERPIECE OF THE EVENT WAS A SPEECH BY JOACHIM HERRMANN, CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE SED POLITBURO AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. HERRMANN CONDEMNED NATO ARMAMENTS PROGRAMS, THE NEUTRON BOMB, CHILE, AND ISRAEL, AND LAUDED THE SOVIET UNION, THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND VARIOUS THIRD WORLD LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. HOWEVER, INTERESTINGLY, HERRMANN MADE NO MENTION WHATSOEVER OF BERLIN, THE FRG, FRG/GDR RELATIONS OR WESTERN MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE GDR. IN PARTICULAR HE MADE NO STATEMENTS WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS RESPONDING TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE SPIEGEL "MANIFESTO" IN EITHER ITS CONTENT OR ON ITS IMPACT ON FRG/GDR RELATIONS.

2. COMMENT. HERRMANN'S SPEECH WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC OCCASION AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE SECOND SECTION OF THE "MANIFESTO" FOR A LEADING PARTY SPOKESMAN TO RESPOND TO ITS ACCUSATIONS. THE FACT THAT THE PARTY DID NOT USE THIS COMMEMORATIVE RALLY FOR SUCH A PURPOSE MAY INDICATE THAT THE GDR IS SEEKING TO MINIMIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "MANIFESTO" INTERNALLY AND TO AVOID INCREASING FRICTION BETWEEN BONN AND EAST BERLIN. END COMMENT. BOLEN

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Message Attributes

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